

play magazine presents

girls of gaming

volume 2



Morene Strident

The half-vampire officer of Kingdom Under Fire's Dark Legion reports for duty

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Take two

"Our biggest concern was whether or not we'd be able to fill these pages year in and year out, but as it happens, we were left with a bigger pile on the cutting room floor than last year."

Welcome to play magazine's second annual Girls of Gaming. After the success of last year's inaugural edition, we took your comments and put them to work in this second volume, resulting in more exclusive/original art, the inclusion of real-life girls of gaming, girls of anime and less copy with more of an emphasis on art and simplicity. Most significantly, however, we've chosen a wider variety of characters this year, many of which don't necessarily register as "sexy." Initially we weren't sure if patrons of this style of magazine would want more or less gratuity, but it turns out that the majority prefers a balance, and so along with the sexier side of gaming, you'll also find characters from the lighter side to complement the unavoidably steamy headlines. In assembling this year's edition, the one thing that struck me the most was how the quantity of female leads in games has continued to grow. Our biggest concern was whether or not we'd be able to fill these pages year in and year out, but as it happens, we were left with a bigger pile on the cutting room floor than last year. What's even cooler is that female gamers seem to be as on the rise as female leads. Not sure where you guys (girls) have been all this time, but we're sure glad you're out of the closet or bathroom or whatever. And one final thought: we have it on good authority that, come 2005, we'll begin to see tastefully integrated sexual situations in gaming rather than the exploitive/toilet humor variety we've seen in the past—a component we feel is vital to games really "growing up." "Mature" should mean more than virtual bimbos engaged in polygonal malleance. Not that there's anything wrong with the exploits of Leisure Suit Larry; we're just excited to see things progress to the cinematic level that's brought so much richness to gaming elsewhere these past few years. Enjoy Girls of Gaming Volume 2.

Dave Halverson Editor In Chief

Editorial

Editor In Chief Dave Halverson
Editorial Director Randy Reddick
Senior Editor Chris Hoffman
PO Editor Mike Griffin
Copy Editor Zach Korwin

Advertising and Sales

Publisher Michael Eisenberg
Contact Michael Eisenberg
eisen@playmagazine.com
Tel 818.707.7786 Ext 100
Fax 818.707.7212

Advertising Director Greg Diaz
gdiaz@playmagazine.com

Design

Art Director Michael Hobbes
Associate Art Director Glen "Molson" Liu

Corporate

Director Of Operations Julie Halverson
jhalverson@playmagazine.com
818.707.7786 ext 103

Administrative Assistant Jennifer Ford
jford@playmagazine.com

Subscriptions And Customer Service
888.932.6122
e-mail: playquest@comcast.com

play magazine Office
Fusion Publishing, Inc.
2820 Carwood St., Suite 200
Agoura Hills, Ca 91301
Tel 818.707.7786 Fax 818.707.7212

For high-quality customized color book orders,
contact Eddie Switzer, FusionPeris
a1(866) 879-4143 Ext 157 or eddie
switzer@fusionperis.com

Legal Mumbo Jumbo

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CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS



ARTPLAYMIX

Freelance illustrators Jason and Heather met in the summer of 2000. Together they collaborated to develop a unique artistic style and, in 2001, launched an online portfolio (now known as "Artplaymix.com"). Since then, Jason and Heather have been hired to create artwork for several nationwide (and worldwide) publications. They married in May 2003 and currently maintain a studio together. Visit <http://www.artplaymix.com> to view more illustrations by this talented husband-and-wife team!



LeSEAN THOMAS

LeSean Thomas is currently writing and penciling a creator-owned comic book series he's developed called Canon Busters, an action-adventure fantasy. Issue #1 will be available in comic book stores in November 2004. He is also currently the supervising character designer for *The Boondocks* animated series based off the popular comic strip of the same name, set to air in the summer of 2005 on Cartoon Network's Adult Swim.

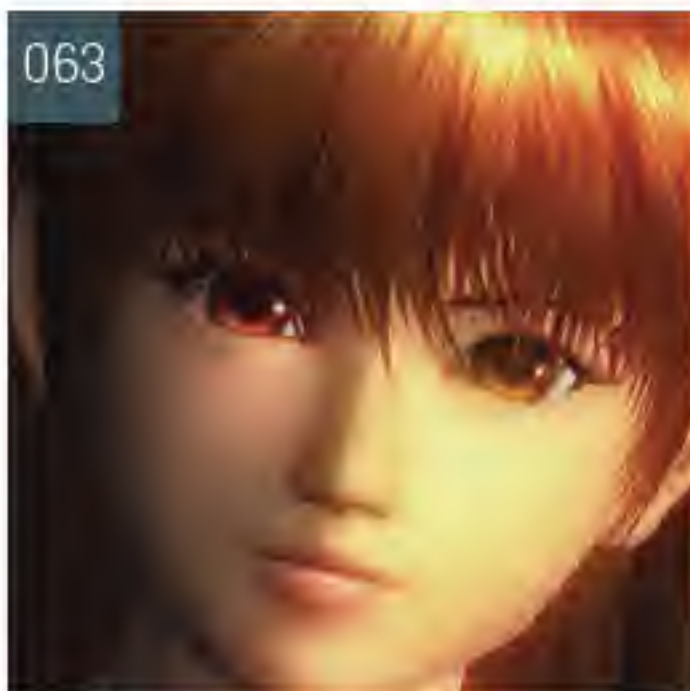
Thomas, 29, was born in South Bronx, NYC and currently resides in southwest Philadelphia and is an avid *Street Fighter* player. During the dot-com boom in NYC in 2000, Thomas helped pioneer the flash animated webseries market by co-creating the visual look of *Whirlgirl*, the first-ever mainstream web series, and later with his creator-owned series, *Battleseed*. He went on to work as a storyboard artist and designer for popular TV shows including *Lizzie McGuire* and *Daria*, *Alias: Animated*, *Kim Possible* and *Teen Titans*.

Thomas' dynamic, unique style, influenced by hip-hop, anime and American animation, led him to the comic book industry, where he has made waves as the penciler for Dreamwave Productions' *Arkanium* and *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, which was also featured in Konami's *TMNT* video game for the Xbox, GameCube and PS2, including his entire first issue of the sell-out comic series.

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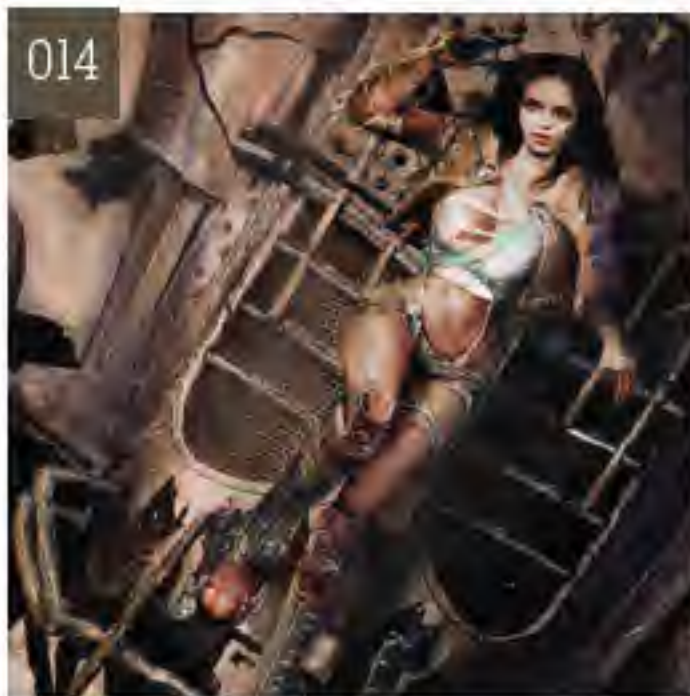
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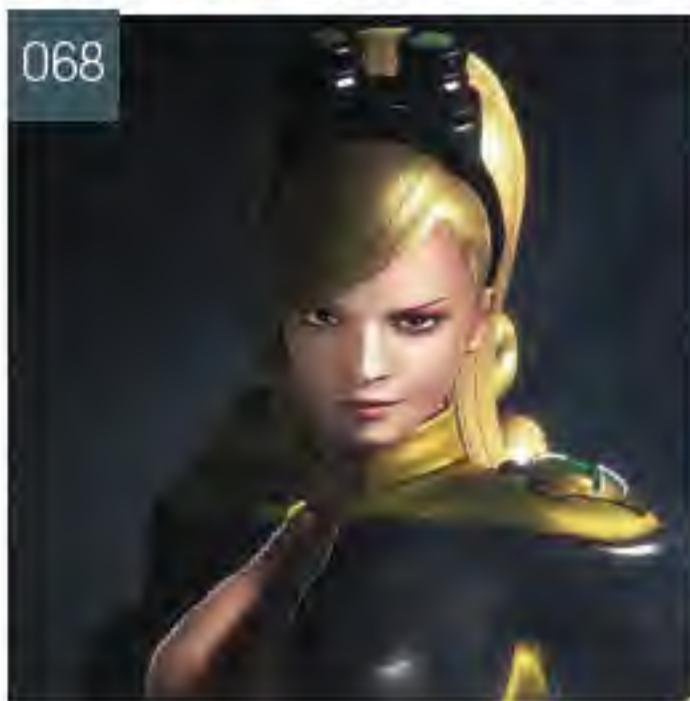
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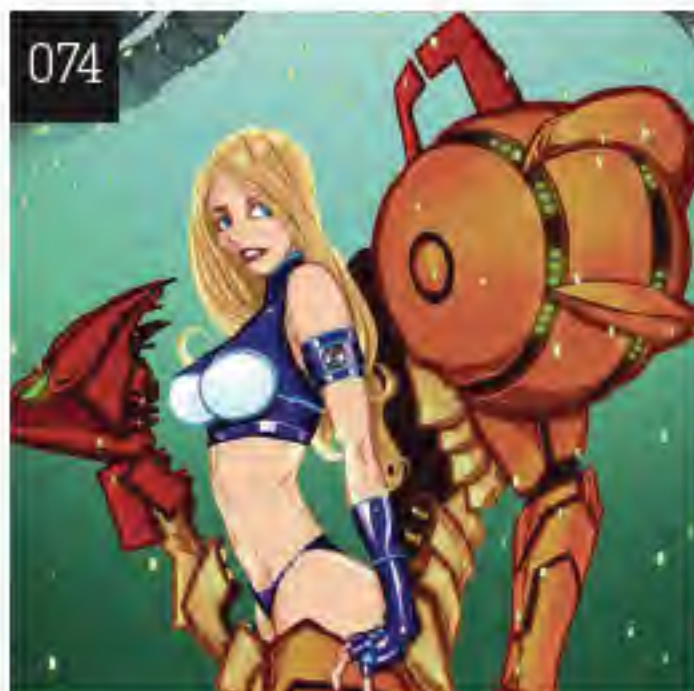


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KINGDOM UNDER FIRE: THE CRUSADERS

LUCRETIA



Combining skillful cinematography, seamless unit deployment and the most visceral real-time medieval combat ever witnessed on a gaming console, Kingdom Under Fire: The Crusaders is an interactive adrenaline high like no other. A large part of the game's appeal can be found in its second quest playing as Lucretia, Dark Elf Captain of the Veilond troop, sent to investigate the circumstances behind her Lord Regnier's invasion of a village near the Holy Ground and to provide support if necessary. When she's not commanding her legions of orcs, swamp mammoths, cavalry archers and elf knights, she's almost constantly at odds with Morene Strident, one of two officers/supervisors assigned to her legion.

Lucretia is arrogant, short-tempered and prone to hysterical outbursts—traits she uses almost exclusively on the dagger-length thorn in her side, Morene, whom she considers a vile half-breed compared to her prestigious bloodline. Luckily (for us), the feeling is mutual. A cold-hearted half-vampire, Morene is a chaotic killing machine free from remorse over the pain or death of others, especially those who die by her hands, so Lucretia's insults register as mere fodder for her to toy with. Together they bring the pain in a very special way.

System: Xbox Developer: Phantagram Publisher: Microsoft Game Studios

"Lucretia is arrogant, short-tempered and prone to hysterical outbursts—traits she uses almost exclusively on the dagger-length thorn in her side, Morene..."



Lucretia looks on as Morene comes to her aid. Talk about girl power...



WOMEN OF MASS DESTRUCTION

NINA WILLIAMS *Death by Degrees*

MAJORMOKOTO KUSANAGI *Ghost in the Shell: Stand Alone Complex*

MAKITA *The Red Star*

JEN KIERCE *Auto Assault*

PRINCESS SELKET *Unreal Championship II: The Liandri Conflict*



DEATH BY DEGREES

NINA WILLIAMS

Once a cold-blooded assassin for hire, the deadly Nina Williams has found herself at an end since awakening from a 19-year cryostasis that rendered her an amnesiac. In *Death by Degrees*, her first solo adventure, the Tekken veteran finds herself working as one of the good guys for once, armed with a lethal arsenal of weapons and bone-crushing moves, though her dark past is likely to come back to haunt her. One thing this Irish beauty does seem to remember is her heated rivalry with her sister, Anna.

System: PlayStation 2 Developer: Namco Publisher: Namco

GHOST IN THE SHELL: STAND ALONE COMPLEX

MAJOR MOTOKO KUSANAGI

The world's most famous female cyborg has a new TV series, feature film and video game. Shown here in her video game form, she wears her polygons well.

System: PlayStation 2 **Developer:** cavia **Publisher:** Bandai Entertainment



THE RED STAR

MAKITA

Caught within the struggle of civil war, Makita has no choice but to fight. After losing both of her parents in the war—on opposing sides, no less—Makita was resolved to follow in their footsteps until she met Maya and Kyuzo and joined the United Republics of the Red Star.

System: PlayStation 2, Xbox **Developer:** Acclaim Austin
Publisher: TBA





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Sexual Themes
Strong Language



PlayStation 2



PC
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AUTO ASSAULT

JEN KIERCE

Jen is a 25 year-old bounty huntress bombshell with jet-black hair, dark blue eyes and a simmering core fueled by red-hot vengeance. After losing her parents to Biomek and Mutant attacks, the star of Auto Assault fell into a ritual of intense training for 20 years. She grew to become a cold and fearless special agent—dissecting foes with surgical precision using her favorite weapon, the Incision Laser, aboard her Beta X Armored Cycle. Jen's mantra, "War is not about who's right. It's about who's left," guides her unquenchable thirst for retribution. While many see the calculated elimination of all non-humans as obsessive, nobody denies Jen respect for her efforts in reclaiming the planet for humanity.

System: PC Developer: NetDevil Publisher: NCsoft





UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP II: THE LIANDRI CONFLICT

PRINCESS SELKET

Described as beautiful, smart and lethal, Princess Selket will do anything to be Empress, even make a deal with the sinister Liandri Corporation. Audiences love her punishing style in the Unreal arena, and the perfect fit on her armor doesn't hurt ratings at all.

System: Xbox Developer: Epic Games Publisher: Midway



WOMEN OF ACTION

THE WOMEN OF CITY OF HEROES City of Heroes
MICHELE, TAMARA and SYLEA Champions: Return to Arms
EILEEN Silent Hill 4: The Room
FARM GIRL Dungeon Siege II
ANNA STEELE and ASTRAL Ghosthunter
ALYX VANCE Half-Life 2
SHEILA CRAWFORD Spy Fiction
ZHAI Forgotten Realms: Demon Stone
MERCURY TRON 2.0: Killer App
RACHEL Ninja Gaiden

CITY OF HEROES

THE WOMEN OF CITY OF HEROES

The gifted ladies of City of Heroes literally come in millions of shapes and sizes, thanks to the game's incredible character creation process. These super-powered females have suitably buff physiques, much like any comic book crime-fighting gal, and they take advantage of innate powers of super speed, flight, mind control and raw firepower. Assuming the role of Tanker, Blaster, Defender, Scrapper and Controller, these heroines fend off Paragon City's villains and expel invaders from parallel dimensions all in a day's work. They don't fret when nails get broken, and they definitely smile when Skulls are smashed.

System: PC Developer: Cryptic Studios Publisher: Microsoft





MICHIELE

CHAMPIONS: RETURN TO ARMS

In the harsh medieval world of EverQuest, the ladies are as battle-hardened as the men, fighting side by side with primitive, yet deadly weapons and mighty magic. Some are pure of heart and spirit, like the high elf cleric Michiele. Some are tough but vulnerable, like the wood elf ranger Tamara. And then there's the firestorm of evil, darkly personified in such backstabbers as Sylea.

System: PlayStation 2 Developer: Snowblind Publisher: Sony



TAMARA



SYLPHIE

SILENT HILL 4: THE ROOM

EILEEN

The women of Silent Hill have always carried a creepy, subtle air of psychosis, and Eileen Galvin is no exception. In this latest in Konami's metaphysical horror series, next-door-neighbor Eileen becomes a fascinating component, playing off main character Henry's subdued, shackled nature. Eileen is certainly not your familiar video game damsel.

System: PlayStation 2, Xbox **Developer:** KCE Tokyo **Publisher:** Konami



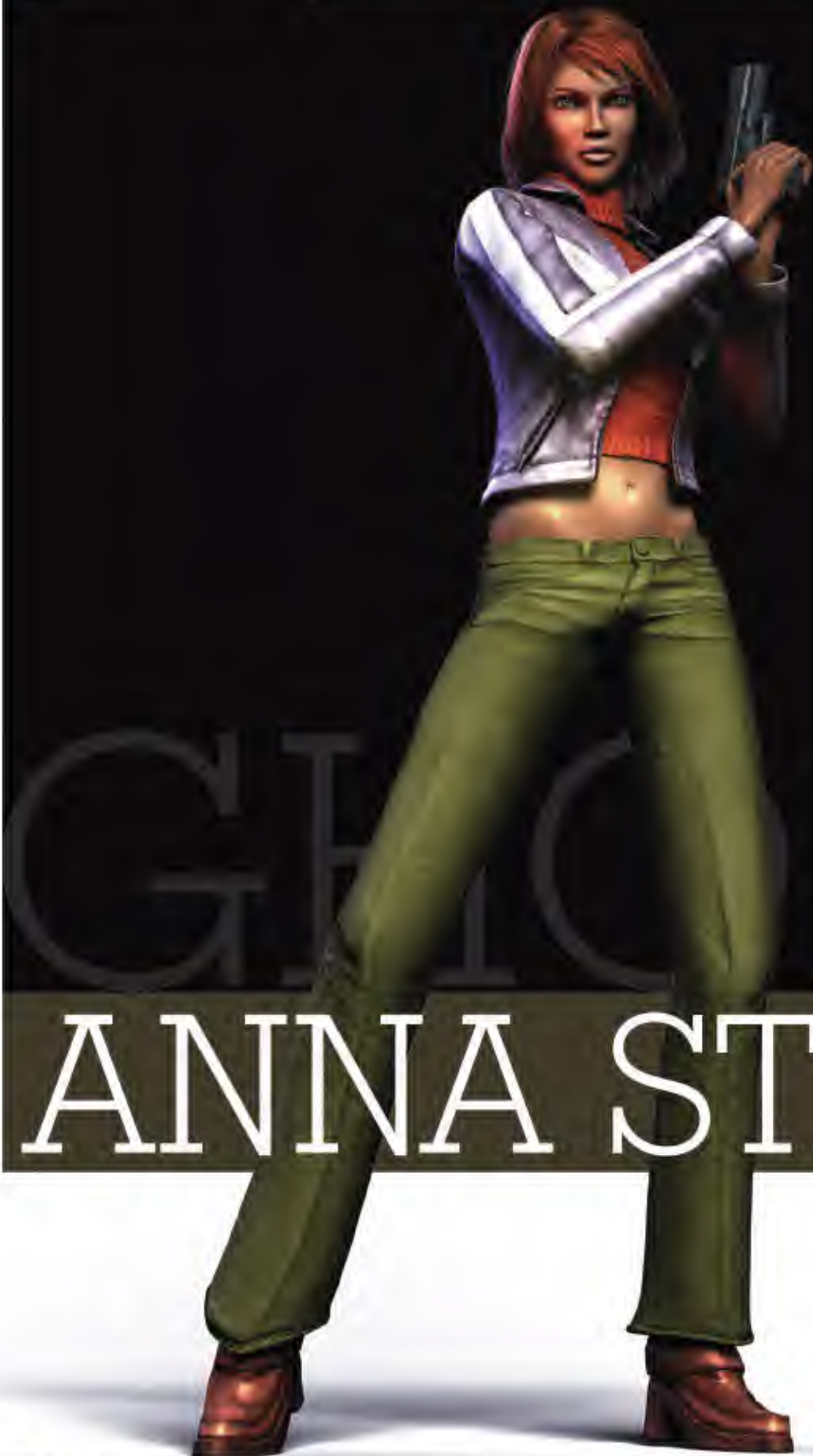
DUNGEON SIEGE II

FARM GIRL

In *Dungeon Siege*, Farm Girl's life as a humble farmer was changed forever by marauding Krug. In *Dungeon Siege II*, she returns to a land scarred by civil war to lead an elite battle party against Valdus, a vicious marauder determined to return the world to order—his order—no matter the cost.

System: PC Developer: Gas Powered Games Publisher: Microsoft





ANNA STEELE

When homicide detective Anna Steele gets kidnapped during an investigation at a reportedly haunted high school, partner Lazarus Jones is thrust into the role of ghost hunter. Without the aid of ethereal spirit Astral, evoked when Lazarus' human hands are incapable, Anna would be lost forever.

System: PlayStation 2 Developer: Cambridge Studios Publisher: Namco



ASTRAL



When homicide detective Anna Steele gets kidnapped during an investigation at a reportedly haunted high school, partner Lazarus Jones is thrust into the role of ghost hunter. Without the aid of ethereal spirit Astral, evoked when Lazarus' human hands are incapable, Anna would be lost forever.

System: PlayStation 2 **Developer:** Cambridge Studios **Publisher:** Namco

ASTRAL

HALF-LIFE 2

ALYX VANCE

Alyx Vance is Gordon Freeman's main ally in Half-Life 2. She is the daughter of Dr. Eli Vance, formerly of the Black Mesa Research Facility from the original HL. Alyx is warm and energetic and has a head for figures. She's also great with a ratchet, and her penchant for robotics and mechanical repairs yields great results. Beyond her technical savvy, Alyx knows how to operate within the madness of City 17. She runs messages between groups of rebels and refugees and smuggles desperate citizens out of City 17. In her capable presence, Gordon tends to be tongue-tied.

System: PC Developer: Valve Software Publisher: VU Games





SPY FICTION

SHEILA CRAWFORD

At only 16 years old, Sheila Crawford is the youngest member of the Phantom Stiletto Force, as well as its only female operative. Despite her age, she's skilled, tough and experienced (she served in the French Foreign Legion) and she doesn't mind wearing something regu in the line of duty. Unlike fellow Phantom member Billy Bishop, Sheila can disguise herself as either sex (though why did she want to pretend she's a man?)

System: PlayStation 2 Developer: Access Games Publisher: Sammy Studios



FORGOTTEN REALMS: DEMON STONE

ZHAI

What would Demon's powerful trio of warriors be without the deadly, swift precision attacks of Zhai? As a rare descendant of a dark elf mother and a wood elf father, this sexy rogue's tongue is as sharp as her blades. Slinking through the shadows, sneaking up for the attack, she's a silent assassin, relying on the deliciously satisfying instant kill of a back-stab.

System: PlayStation 2, Xbox Developer: Stormfront
Publisher: Atari



THON 2.0: KILLER APP MERCURY

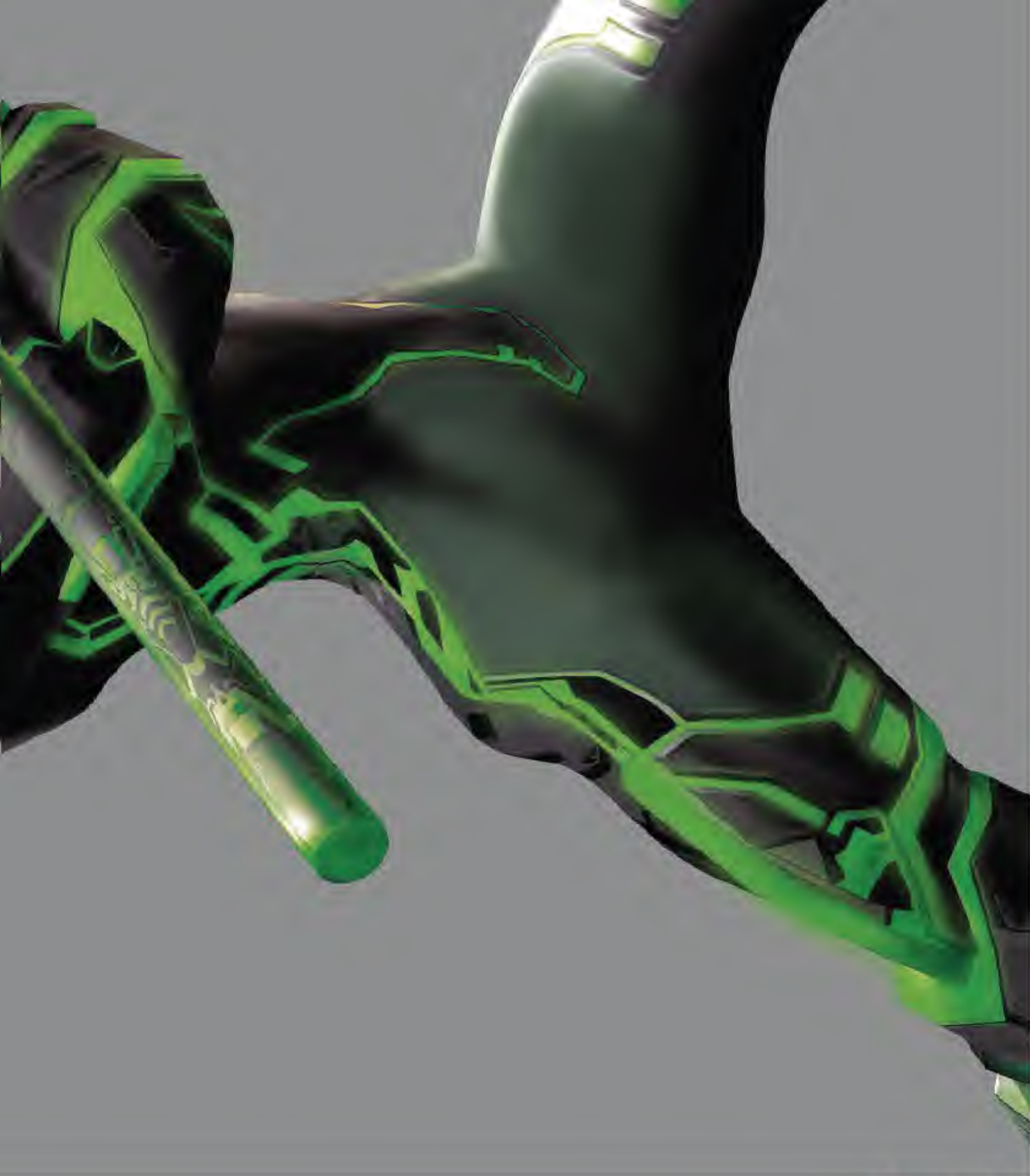
Back to help Jet Bradley once again in THON 2.0: Killer App, for Xbox and GBA, Mercury—a flashy game 'bot with an unknown user—is the ultimate in processor technology, voiced by the ultimate in human technology: Rebecca Romijn. When she's not throwing a glitch into the matrix, you can find her fighting up the grids on her Light Cycle.

System: Xbox, PC, GBA Developer: Minomith/Olincay Publishers: Buena Vista Interactive



ALTER EGO

Romijn's hard drive and giving light cycle everywhere cause for celebration to none other than Rebecca Romijn. Sure beats Rowland.



NINJA GAIDEN

RACHEL

Rachel's a beast of a killer, aberrant in strength and wielding a massive war hammer that cuts through fiends—monsters belonging to the Vigoor Empire—with brutal efficiency. Known as a Vigorian Fiend Hunter, she is on the warpath to find her sister, Alma, who has become a fiend herself, infected after being drawn in by Lord Doku. Like her sister, Rachel carries a strange gene as a result of her unique powers that leaves her vulnerable to transformation into a fiend.

System: Xbox Development: Team Ninja Production: Taito





EPIC BEAUTIES

DEVONA LYNN and MONK HEALER Guild Wars
DARK ELF ASSASSIN Lineage II: The Chaotic Chronicle
SAGE, HUNTER and WIZARD Ragnarok Online
SHAHDEE Prince of Persia: Warrior Within
TERRA, OLGA, GREYIA, JUE, SERA, XISA Ys: The Ark of Napishtim
WU THE LOTUS BLOSSOM Jade Empire
KAHM KOENIG Shadow Hearts: Covenant
CHARLOTTE and BARBARA Growlanser Generations
ORO-MAGNON WOMAN BC
SHION UZUKI Xenosaga Episode II: Jenseits von Gut und Bose
JINAMIA Shin Megami Tensei: Digital Devil Saga

GUILD WARS

DEVONA & CYNN

Though Guild Wars' Devona and Cynn have worked together to save the kingdom on many occasions, the pretty stars of this subscription-free action-MMO are an unlikely duo. Devona is all business; a powerful fighter equally skilled with the hammer and sword, this unshakeable defender of Ascalon honors her brave father's memory. She also knows more than 50 ways to kill you, and the count is rising—daily. Cynn is a sly, unpredictable elemental firestorm. Her sharp tongue has pissed off most of the guild lords on the continent of Tyria, but she backs up her gusto with amazing spectacles of attack magic.

System: PC Developer: ArenaNet Publisher: NCsoft





MONK HEALER

She might look like a goddess, but this Monk Healer is actually just one of Guild Wars' playable character classes.



LINEAGE II: THE CHAOTIC CHRONICLE

DARK ELF ASSASSIN

There's an unspoken rule in MMO game design that involves making your female elves more attractive than those of any other race. The queen of the hill in this category is NCsoft's Lineage II, whose shapely silver-haired dark elf females practice a seductive, minimalist fashion sense. With straps of tight black leather and curves barely supported by thin lattices of garter and chains, it's no wonder the dark elf women excel in the role of shadowy assassin. They also have superior attack attributes, can hold their breath for long periods and have excellent night vision. Much like Shilen, the goddess of death worshipped by this sinister race, the dark elf assassin is a fatal beauty.

System: PC Developer: EAG Publisher: NCsoft



RAGNAROK ONLINE

SAGE, HUNTER and WIZARD

Hand-drawn manga-style characters come to life in the online universe of Ragnarok, where you can choose from the class of your choice—including female sages, wizard or hunter—to embark on a journey of chat and combat. Hold that guild war, I've chopped a nail!

System: PC Developer: Gravity Publisher: Gravity



PRINCE OF PERSIA: WARRIOR WITHIN

SHAHDEE

The only entity the Empress of Time can trust to do her bidding competently, without question and with the appropriate dispensing of venom is Shahdee. In Prince of Persia: Warrior Within, she is one of the Prince's main adversaries. She leads the Island of Time's army of animated sand creatures with the cutting precision of a veteran commander and mercilessly whips the Empress' servants into shape. Shahdee stands toe-to-toe with the Prince in combat, matching his frenzy of blades with blocks, counters and brutal rapid attacks, and she does it with the agility of a cat and the grace of a gothic supermodel. The ferocious Shahdee is not entirely content as a subordinate beneath the Empress, however.

System: PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube, PC Developer: Ubisoft Montreal Publisher: Ubisoft

YS: THE ARK OF NAPISTIM

System: PlayStation 2, PSP Developer: Falcom Publisher: Korami

TERRA

Daughter of a thief and a pirate, Terra first met Adol Christin on his journey through Xandria. Since then, she has left her home and travels on her father's pirate ship, the Tres Mares. With her father, Terra set sail to see the world and to find Adol.



OLHA

Olha is a Rehdan priestess with long ears and a lovely face. She is pure and kind, but has a strong heart. She specializes in the healing and recovery, and priestess often. The Rehdan tribe lives in harmony with nature and follows the winged guardian, Aina.



CREVIA

All-new for the PSP version of Ys, no one knows the true intentions of this mysterious figure, nor where and when she first appeared.



JUE, SERA and XISA

These three faeries are imbued with the power of the elements. They cause trouble on the island of Gamber, but their origin and motives are still a mystery.



WU LOTUS THE BLOSSOM JADE EMPIRE

Wu the Lotus Blossom represents one of three (that we know of) playable characters in BioWare's half-a-decade-in-the-making Jade Empire. Here is a balanced and sensible approach to combat, both fast and powerful. Her strength lies in her flexibility, a mix of melee attacks, Chi-based abilities and defensive moves that ensure she will never be caught off-guard.

System: Xbox Developer: BioWare
Publisher: Microsoft Game Studios





SHADOW HEARTS: COVENANT

KARIN KOENIG

Once an officer in the German army, Karin Koenig found herself abandoning her post after she was betrayed on a mission into a remote French hamlet. The revelations that followed led the stunning 25-year-old redhead to embark on a quest to stop a dangerous cult, trading in her military uniform for something a bit more flashy. Karin's weapon of choice is a deadly sabre.

System: PlayStation 2/Darstellung
Anzahl/Nachweis Publisher: Midway

GROWLANSEER GENERATIONS

CHARLONE

Born into a life of privilege, Charlone Claudius has nonetheless enlisted in the Burnstein army, hoping to do her family proud and eventually reach the esteemed position of Imperial Knight. Although a bit haughty, Charlone is an excellent archer and magic user who cares deeply for her little brother as well as her country. On the other side of the coin is Barbara, who, generations prior, was part of the forces of darkness that spread across the land. Once a heroic Spirit Messenger, Barbara has given up her former life and allied herself with the evil Zion.

System: PlayStation 2 **Developer:** Atlus/Career Soft
Publisher: Working Designs



BARBARA

BC

CRO-MAGNON WOMAN

Peter Molyneux's prehistoric epic for the Xbox is a living, breathing slice of wild, pure, simple, Cro-Magnon life. There's nothing like a woman that can take down a T-Rex and cook it up too.

System: Xbox Developer: Intrepid/Lionhead Publisher: Microsoft Game Studios



XENOSAGA EPISODE II: JENSEIT'S VON GUT UND BOSE

SHION UZUKI

Cute little Shion Uzuki, the chief engineer from Xenosaga Episode I, has ditched her intellectual appearance and taken on a much more mature look for the sequel. The brainy 22-year-old is highly athletic and possesses a strong sense of justice; she's also the main person responsible for creating the sexy combat android KOS-MOS. Despite this fact, Shion seems to have an affection for KOS-MOS that goes beyond platonic.

System: PlayStation 2 Developer: Monolith Publisher: Namco



SHIN MEGAMI TENSEI: DIGITAL DEVIL SAGA

JINANA

Green-eyed Jinana is the leader of the Maribel Tribe and the only female tribal leader in the rain-pounded city known as the Junkyard. Despite living in a harsh world where tribal warfare is a way of life, Jinana prefers not to hurt her foes and rejects the common practice of devouring one's fallen enemies. Jinana can also transform into a demon form called Usas, praised as the most beautiful and graceful of her kind.

System: PlayStation 2 **Developer:** Atlus **Publisher:** Atlus



NASTY GIRLS

BLOODRAYNE Bloodrayne 2

TALA Darkwatch

RUBY GRACE Dead to Rights II: Hell to Pay

SALLY MAE Leisure Suit Larry: Magna Cum Laude


 The cover art for BloodRayne 2 features the titular character, Rayne, with her signature red hair and yellow eyes. She is dressed in a black and red outfit with fingerless gloves and thigh-high boots. She is holding a large, blood-stained sword over a man in a dark suit who is lying face down on the ground. The man's head is severed, and blood is visible. The background is a dark, fiery red sky with a large, dark, cylindrical object on the left. The title "BLOODRAYNE" is written in large, white, serif capital letters across the middle of the image.

BLOODRAYNE

BLOODRAYNE 2

Having completed her latest quest to dispose of her family pride, we caught up with Rayne to see what she's up to next...

System: PlayStation 2, Xbox, PC **Developer:** Terminal Reality **Publisher:** Majesco

play: Hey, Rayne...hungry?
BloodRayne: No, human.

Great; let's get to it then. What kind of a childhood did you have? Did the other kids know you were half vamp? Ever drain any guy for looking at you the wrong way?
My childhood was hardly ideal. You know my story—I'm the product of my human mother's rape by my vampire father, Kagan. That and his subsequent murder of her don't make for happy family memories. I laid pretty low and kept to myself early on so no one knew my secret...unless, of course, someone did look at me the wrong way.

What do you do when you're not hunting down Nazis or trying to off your dad?
Typical vixen stuff—you know, like posing for Playboy.

Yeah, I'm still trying to forget that man-image of

you... Do you date mortals or keep things on a strictly undead basis?
Hey, it's their airbrush... Actually, I prefer mortals. The undead aren't usually very good conversationalists.

Do you actually crave blood or is it more an "if it's there, I'll drink it" type of thing?
I need blood to survive so I can't help but crave it. "If it's there, I'll drink it" would apply more to chocolate milk.

Too much dairy isn't good, you know. Where do you live? Nice place? It's not all Gothed out is it?
My bachelorette pad is swank. Very classy red-and-black décor throughout. No dungeon set up for me, babe.

In your new movie, you'll be fighting alongside Michelle Rodriguez, back from the dead after Resident Evil. Is she a badass or what? She kicked ass in SWAT...

Michelle and I get along great since we're both badass. No issues there.

How much to rid the world of the Olsen twins, Paris Hilton, J-Lo and Britney?
The world would be much better off with more redheads and fewer blondes...

We'll start a collection. When you're not on a mission, do you ever use your aura vision for ill-gotten gains?
You mean like Superman using his x-ray vision to see through clothing? Yeah—I've been known to take advantage of a "situation" that way.

And finally, of all the vid-game vixens out there, which would you love to take on the most?
Lara Croft. Raiding tombs is so old-school.

"...I'm the product of my human mother's rape by my vampire father, Kagan. That and his subsequent murder of her don't make for happy family memories."

DARKWATCH

TALENT

In Sammy's upcoming vampire-Western, *Darkwatch*, if lead half-vamp Jericho chooses the dark path, Tala—rather than the opposing good girl Cassidy—will aid him in his endeavors...in more ways than one. This is why the dark side has never had a recruitment problem.

System: PlayStation 2, Xbox Developer: Sammy Studios
Publisher: Sammy Studios





DEAD TO RIGHTS II: HELL TO PAY

RUBY GRACE

In the upcoming *Dead to Rights II: Hell to Pay*, Jack and his canine bail-muncher return, but this time they've got outside help: stripper Ruby Grace, a well-connected informant in the seedy underbelly of Grant City.

SYSTEM: PlayStation 2, Xbox, PC (DirectX 9) *Rated M for Mature*



CUTTIE HONEYYS

COURTNEY GEARS Ratchet & Clank: Up Your Arsenal
CARMELITA FOX and CONSTABLE MEYLA Sly 2: Band of Thieves
ASHELIN, KEIRA and TESS Jak 3
KRYSTAL Star Fox
FALNA and MOON JUTU Tak 2: The Staff of Dreams

COURTNEY GEARS

RATCHET & CLANK UP YOUR ARSENAL

Our world has Britney Spears...the Ratchet & Clank universe has Courtney Gears. This robotic pop sensation is all the rage throughout our heroes' corner of the galaxy, even incorporating a full dance number into the latest R&C title. Courtney seems to have the hots for Clank, and would eagerly grind his gears for a role on his TV show...although her bubbly outward appearance may be hiding a darker side.

System: PlayStation 2 **Developer:** Insomniac Games **Publisher:** Sony



SLY 2: BAND OF THIEVES

Carmelita Fox and Constable Neyla both want Sly, but for different reasons. Too bad for Sly neither one seems headed for a happy ending.

System: PlayStation 2 Developer: Sucker Punch Publisher: Sony



CARMELITA FOX



CONSTABLE NEYLA





JAK 3

KEIRA, ASHELIN and TESS

Wavering and Westside and newly ravaged Haven City in Naughty Dog's final chapter of the maiden Jak and Daxter trilogy. Jak has three lovely ladies to contend with—Keira, Ashelin and Tess—all three of which have really nice...big...ears.

System: PlayStation 2 Developer: Naughty Dog Publisher: Sony

STAR FOX

KRYSTAL

This foxy native of the planet Zeniba appeared briefly as a playable character in *Star Fox Adventures* before getting captured and spending the rest of the game behind bars. At the game's conclusion, however, Krystal was rescued by Fox McCloud and became a full member of the Star Fox team. In the upcoming *Star Fox* title for GameCube, she's back and dressed to kill—literally and figuratively.

System: GameCube **Developer:** Namco **Publisher:** Nintendo



TAK 2: THE STAFF OF DREAMS

MOON JUJU
FAUNA &

In his quest to save the Moon Juju—queen of the realm and goddess of the Pupununu people—Tak is aided by her daughters, Flora and Fauna, of which Fauna is the edgier of the siblings... Okay, she's evil.

System: PlayStation 2, Xbox, GameCube, GBA **Developer:** Avalanche **Publisher:** THQ



FIGHTERS

HITOMI, KASUMI and TINA Dead or Alive: Ultimate
HNO, DIZZY, JAM, MAY and MILLIA Guilty Gear Isuka
CHUN-LI, SAIJIA, FELICIA and ROSE Capcom Fighting Evolution
MAI and LIEN KOF: Maximum Impact
CHRISTIE and ASUKA Tekken 5
BEIKO, DIXIE, BECKY, NOBLE ROSE and ANESTHESIA Rumble Roses



TINA ARMSTRONG



HITOMI



KASUMI

DEAD OR ALIVE: ULTIMATE

She may look innocent enough, but good luck taking on the razor-sharp ninjitsu assassin skills of Kasumi—a Dead or Alive fan-favorite. No less of an effective fighter is the petite Hitomi, a master of karate, which she learned at an early age from her expert father. As for the imposing beauty Tina, her brawling skills are a bit more aggressive, culled from her side job as a pro wrestler.

System: Xbox Developer: Team Ninja
Publisher: Tecmo

GUILTY GEAR ISUKA

Despite their disparate backgrounds, national origins and fighting styles, there are a few things that the women of Guilty Gear Isuka have in common: they all kick ass, they all know how to rock, and they all look damn good doing it. In their most recent game, Guilty Gear Isuka, they can even get it on in a foursome. While Millia Rage, armed with deadly hair, may be the darling of the group, bewitching I-No is the only game female in memory to celebrate victory by tearing off her top.

System: PlayStation 2, Arcade Developer: Arc System Works
Publisher: Sammy

I-NO



JAM KURADOBERI



DIZZY



MAY



MILLIA RAGE



CAPCOM FIGHTING EVOLUTION

CHUN-LI, SAKURA, FELICIA and ROSE



Leggy Chun-Li is the original queen of fighting games; Rose is the mystic seer whose destiny is to face M. Bison; young Sakura wants nothing more than to train under Ryu's tutelage; and Felicia... well, what can you say about a cat-girl who wears something so skimpy that it barely passes for an outfit? Together they are some of gaming's greatest female fighters, and they're all mixing it up in Capcom Fighting Evolution. Hopefully Cammy and Morrigan will join them in a sequel.

System: PlayStation 2, Xbox Developer: Capcom Publisher: Capcom



KOF: MAXIMUM IMPACT

LIEN and MAI

Ninja girl Mai Shiranui rocked many a fighting fan's world when she debuted in Fatal Fury 2 back in 1992. Her mastery of fan and flame attacks, her revealing outfits, her apparent victory cry of "Me bouncy!" and animation to match have helped her remain one of the genre's most popular characters ever since. Most recently, she has made the jump to 3D in KOF: Maximum Impact (where she's bouncier than ever), joined by newcomer Lien Neville. A native of England, Lien is a cold-blooded killer for hire who will stop at nothing to achieve victory, earning the busty blonde the nickname of "The Gorgeous Assassin."

System: PlayStation 2 Developer: SNK Playmore Publisher: SNK Neo Geo USA



TEKKEN 5

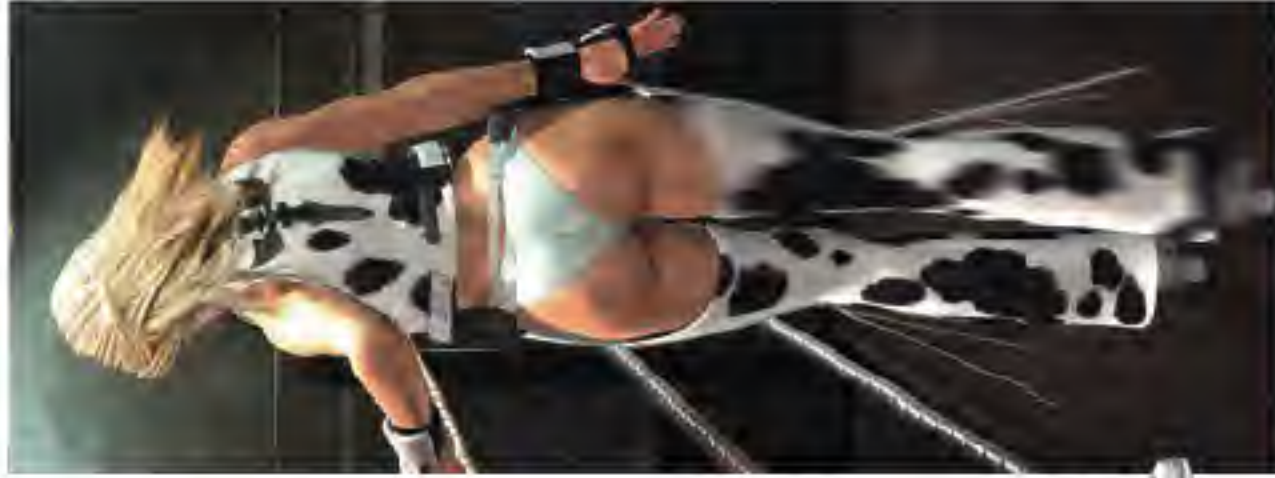
CHRISTIE MONTEIRO and ASUKA KAZAMA

Christie made her debut in Tekken 4, using the same dance-like capoeira fighting style that her master, Eddy Gordo, had used successfully in the previous King of Iron Fist Tournament — the difference being that Christie looked, much, much better doing it. Now the irrepressible Brazilian is back, this time fighting for technology that can save her grandfather's life. Asuka is a newcomer to the Tekken universe, joining the tournament to get revenge on a man who hospitalized her father and attacked his dojo. Her exact relationship to Jun Kazama has not yet been revealed.

System: PlayStation 2, Arcade Developer: Namco Publisher: Namco

REIKO, BECKY, DIXIE, NOBLE ROSE AND ANESTHESIA

System: PlayStation 2 Developer: Yuke's/XBUE Tokyo Publisher: Konami



Reiko was raised and trained from early childhood by her mother, a legendary wrestler in her own right. When she was 12, Reiko was told that her mother had died during a match while on tour in the U.S. Reiko's older sister, with whom she had grown up training, left for the U.S., vowing to seek revenge, and has not been heard from since. A student and top-ranked member of the wrestling club at Japanese Women's Physical Education College, Reiko also worked part time as a race queen to support herself until the day she came across an ad seeking competitors for the Rumble Roses Championship tournament series.

Candy chooses to go back to school after Miss Spencer puts her body on the line trying to convince her to return. Realizing that the whole "rebel" image is not for her, Candy instead dedicates herself to helping out the school by joining the cheerleading squad. She even decides to use her once-hated childhood nickname, Becky (real name: Rebecca Welsh), as her ring name to show her true devotion to being a wrestler for justice.

The only daughter of a prominent Texas ranch owner, Dixie helps out with the family ranch while also working at the local sheriff's office. Needless to say, a lot of men try to get into her handcuffs. Although strong-willed and candid, like most typical Texan women, she is friendly and sociable. Dixie has been a regular winner of rodeos since she was 12 and was recently ranked as the number-one most eligible bachelorette in Texas. She decided to try her hand at Rumble Roses when she found out the daughter of her idol, the legendary wrestler Kamikaze Rose, entered the tournament.

After getting her memory back and freeing Reiko from brainwashing, Eva Rose suddenly disappears. A mysterious knight of the rose appears in her place—her name is Noble Rose, and she fights in the name of love and justice with breathtakingly stylish moves. Her sights for justice are firmly set on Anesthesia.

This mysterious self-appointed nurse serves as Lady X's assistant. A voluptuous Latina beauty in a white uniform, she always seems to sport a slightly chilling grin. She is particularly gifted at complicated submission moves. Can you show her where it hurts?



RETRO

GUM Jet Grind Radio, Jet Set Radio Future
WYNA GRAPPLE Thousand Arms
SAMUS ARAN Metroid series
AIRAN JO Sin & Punishment
SONYA BELMONT Castlevania Legends
TYRIS FLARE Golden Axe series
SERENA CORSAIRE Guardian Heroes



JET GRIND RADIO &
JET SET RADIO FUTURE

CRUTCH

Gaming's grooviest rebel. To play her is to know the meaning of freedom and style in a video game. Containing the best ensemble cast anytime, anywhere in one of the best games ever made, Jet Set Radio Future manufactures cool and fun, thanks in no small part to a little Gum and a whole lotta spray paint.

System: Dream cast, Xbox Developer: Smilebit Publisher: Sega



THOUSAND ARMS

WYNA GRAPPLE

Raised in a pirate's hideout, Wyna Grapple is a straightforward, carefree girl who prefers to live life her own way. While she appears feminine and ultra-sexy, she talks and especially fights like one of the boys.

System: PlayStation Developer: Red Company Publisher: Atlus

METROID series

SAMUS ARAN

One of the premier gaming femme fatales, Samus traded in overt sexiness for shrouded, enigmatic power. In her gender-concealing spacesuit, Samus explored the intriguing subterranean depths of an alien-infested planet, eradicating hordes of enemies and performing amazing physical feats with what was, in our trained minds of the time, normally the skill reserved for a one-man army. An entire adventure unfolded before we even knew our hero was indeed a woman—a shocking discovery that goes down as one of the more memorable moments in gaming.

System: NES, SNES, GameCube, Game Boy, GBA
Developer: Nintendo Publisher: Nintendo



SIN & PUNISHMENT

AIRAN JO

Extremely knowledgeable with machines, Airan supports her comrades Adhi and Saki with valuable intel in their battle against the Lufians—mutated life forms created by humans as food—and the “Armed Volunteers” sent to control them when they begin eating their makers. Considered by most who’ve experienced it as the best N64 game ever made, Sin & Punishment never made it to the states, but its memory burns on forever.

System: Nintendo 64 (Japan) Developer: Treasure Publisher: Nintendo

CASTLEVANIA LEGENDS and
CASTLEVANIA: RESSURECTION (canceled)

SONYA BELMONT

Once billed as the original vampire slayer of the Belmont lineage, Sonya Belmont had her history rewritten by Konami recently, placing her further along the timeline. At any rate, Sonya is the first female Belmont to take up arms against Dracula, proficiently wielding the family whip to send the undead back to whence they came. There are even hints that she is romantically linked with Dracula's son, Alucard.

System: Game Boy, Dreamcast Developer: Konami
Publisher: Konami



GOLDEN AXE series

TYRIS FLARE

Tyris Flare carries with her the esteemed honor of being the first bikini-clad warrior to grace a game where you could really tell what the characters were wearing, making her arcade debut back in '89 and hitting Sega Genesis shortly thereafter. Her weapon of choice is the sword, but she also exerts a mean flying kick, is a proficient beast rider, and has mastered the power of flame magic, which she can unleash in various forms, including a phoenix or a giant dragon.

System: Arcade, Genesis, Saturn, Game Boy Advance
Developer: Sega **Publisher:** Sega

Jason Martin



Holtzman & Martin



GUARDIAN HEROES, ADVANCE GUARDIAN HEROES

SERENA (CELENA)

Serena joins fellow GH alumna Nicole and Mischief Makers' Marina as one of the few female characters from a Treasure game to make an appearance in a second title. In the original *Guardian Heroes* on Sega's 2D powerhouse Saturn, the green-haired princess led her kingdom into a revolt against the false royal family, puppets of the wizard Kanon, using huge slashing charges, fire and ice magic, and GH's only timed counterattack via her shield. In the recent sequel, *Advance Guardian Heroes*, Kanon returns with the cackling Zur to exploit the souls of the legendary warriors, Serena (her name now spelled Celena) tragically among them.

System: Sega Saturn, Game Boy Advance Developer: Treasure Publisher: Sega, Ubisoft



ART: LEESEAN THOMAS



WOMEN OF ANIME

CHIKA and AOI Ai Yori Aoshi
OGIN THE PUPPETEER Requiem from the Darkness
PANDY Dead Leaves
SATA Blood: The Last Vampire
TITA Plastic Little
KOMUGI and KOYORI Nurse Witch Komugi
MUNE-MUNE Magical Shopping Arcade Abenobashi
HAKUFU SOMSAKU Ikki Tousen
KET and YURI Dirty Pair
LADY DEATH Lady Death
ECLAIR Kiddy Grade
MIMAMI, USHIO and YUUKI Neo Ranga
THE GIRLS OF TENCHI Tenchi series
NANOF MAKUHARI Read or Die
RIO KINEZONO Burn Up W, Excess and Scramble
MEG and IO Burst Angel



AI YORI AOSHI

CHIKA MINAZUKI & AOI SAKURABE

Chika is a bright, active junior high school student, while Aoi was brought up to be the fiancée to the son of the Hanabishi family so that he could become heir to her family's Kimonos conglomerate. She's prepared her entire life to be a good wife, but where there's an arranged marriage there is often fire.

Studio: Geneon Entertainment



REQUIEM FROM THE DARKNESS

OGIN THE PUPPETEER

If you see her, you're probably about to meet your maker—but what a way to go. The sultry Ogin travels with fellow reapers Mateishi the Trickster and Nagamimi the Bird Caller, dispensing fate to those who have it coming. Turns out karma's not a "bitch" after all.

Studio: Geneon Entertainment

DEAD LEAVES

PANDY

Pandy eats the likes of Mallory for lunch with Mickey as an appetizer as the reigning queen of animated murder, mischief, mayhem and sex in a body bag. Watching her work was one of 2004's guiltiest pleasures.

Studio: Manga Entertainment



BLOOD: THE LAST VAMPIRE

SAYA

A loner expelled from human society as well as the domain of beasts, paying heed to no one, beholden to no one—this beautiful nocturnal creature simply roams the darkness, bringing about a cruel destiny to all those who cross her path.

Studio: Manga Entertainment



PLASTIC LITTLE

TITA

When Tita Myu Koshigaya (center), the captain of the submarine Cha Cha Maru, and her crew rescue a girl being chased by a villain that looks like a portable shower, a major jiggle-fest ensues. So what if the story is an excuse for 50 minutes of sexy cool animation? These girls break the jiggle counter.

Studio: ADV Films



NURSE WITCH KOMUGI

KOMUGI NAKAHARA & KOYORI KOKOROJINT

It's wannabe cosplay idol Komugi and centerfold model Koyori to the rescue when the evil Ungrar busts out of vaccine world to plague the Earth. Alter egos to the rescue!

Studio: ADV Films



MAGICAL SHOPPING ARCADE ABENOBASHI

MUNE-MUNE

Found in various dimensions of the Abenobashi Shopping Arcades, you never know what Mune-Mune will be up to next. But whether she's trying to help or kill time-travelers Sasshi and Arumi, she always keeps things interesting, if not bordering on surreal, and very, very bouncy.

Studio: ADV Films

IKKI TOUSEN

HAKUFU SONSAKU

The eternal fate that has been handed down for over 1800 years is now being fought by ancient warriors who have been reincarnated into the students of seven top schools! But can this über-hot blonde (aka the pooble bomb girl) be the legendary Snow-Haku, the one said to defeat many in battle? Yes, absolutely, and is she ever something to see in action.

Studio: Geneon Entertainment

DIRTY PAIR

KEI &
YURI

Kei's gun-happy, a tomboy and a total bitch; Yuri is calm, collected, anal and completely boy-crazy. Together they're among anime's most well-known and loved crime-fighting duos: the Dirty Pair. Through two iterations and countless episodes they've endured, and left a massive pile of bodies and wreckage in their wake.

Studio: ADV Films



LADY DEATH

LADY DEATH

What's a girl to do after discovering she's the devil's daughter and subsequently burnt at the stake and damned to hell? Become Lady Death and return the favor, of course! Payback's a bitch (on flaming horseback), even when you're Beelzebub.

Studio: ADV Films





KIDDY GRADE

ECLAIR

GOTT (Galactic Organization of Trade and Tariffs) ES team member Eclair is "C" class and carries the ability "Power," giving her super-human strength and speed beyond even the most battle-ready cyborgs, which you'd never know by looking at her or meeting her, which would likely follow her announcing her own entrance...loudly.

Studio: FUNimation Productions

MINAMI, USHIO and YUUHI SHIMABARA

MIHO IRIKURA

Minami, Ushio and Yuuhi are, by most accounts, normal girls, right up until the day they discover they're somehow linked to a massive monster god from a tiny island in the South Pacific that in a bittersweet twist of fate will soon become their own. They get the god and the island. Trump, eat your heart out.

Studio: ADV Films



TENCHI SERIES
THE GIRLS OF TENCHII

Based around Tenchi Masaki—a high-school student whose life is turned upside down after an encounter with a “demon” at a mountain shrine—the ongoing saga has become one of anime’s most long-lived studio: ADV Films

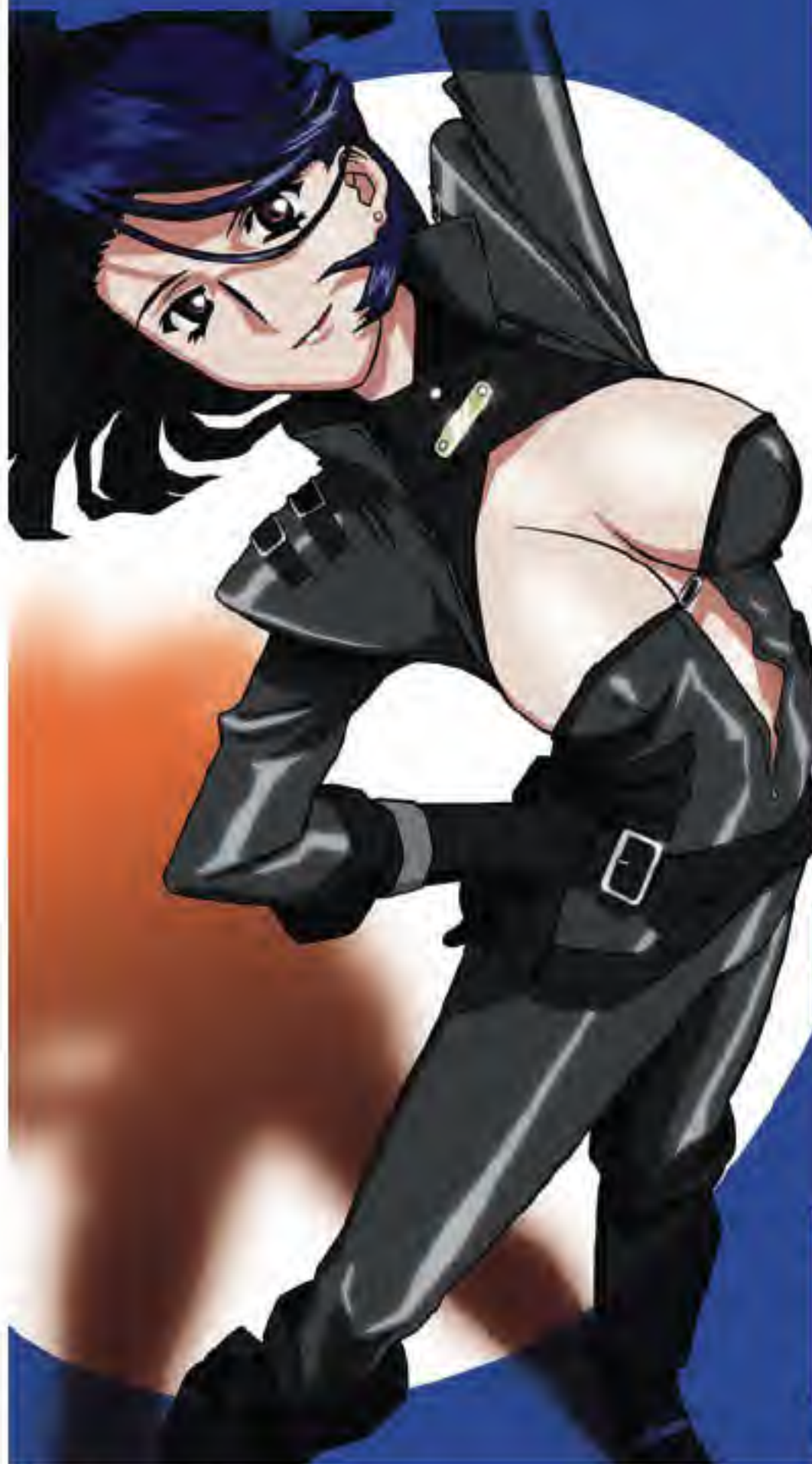


READ OR DIE

NANCY MAKUHARI

Working with paper-user and fellow agent Yomiko Readman as an operative for The Royal British Libraries Division of Special Operations, Nancy, aka Miss Deep, has the ability to dive through anything, called phasing. She's also a master of disguise, although it seems a shame to cover any of her up.

Studio: Manga Entertainment



BURN UP W/ EXCESS AND SCRAMBLE

RIO KINEZONO

One of anime's most beloved big-boob blonde bombshells, Rio is still going strong, working to pay off her credit card debt (designer undies don't come cheap) by saving Neo Tokyo from a gaggle of mostly really dim would-be super villains.

Studio: ADV Films/Geneon Entertainment





BURST ANGEL

MEG & JO

Mix equal parts beautiful girls, giant robots, a fish-out-of-water scenario and give it all to Studio Gonzo and you get one of 2005's most anticipated new anime series—Burst Angel, about an aspiring pastry chef who signs on as a part-time chef for a group of strange women (two of whom are pictured) to get into a prestigious cooking academy in France. If only he knew just how strange...

Studio: FUNimation



GIRL OF GAMING

VEELA

On her way to (hopefully) becoming a sports anchor or video game TV hostess, Ashley "Veela" Esqueda gets plenty of rest, reads books (the horror!) and plays a whole lotta video games

play: How'd you get the nickname "Veela"?

Veela: I got my nickname from Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire. A veela is a human type of creature that dances to enchant, and make the boys do crazy things...but when provoked, they turn into fire-throwing bird-like creatures. That's how I am, a pretty face that can get really ugly if you mess with me. [smiles]

How long have you been seriously into video games?

Since I was three. My mom bought me a Nintendo for my third birthday...I guess it just snowballed from there.

Do you play console stuff or stick mainly to online FPS?

I play lots of console games. I have an Xbox and a PS2, and I'll be getting a GameCube fairly soon. I carry around a Game Boy Advance SP too, so I'm not choosy. I just love video games. I play other types of games on my PC as well, not just FPS.

So you prefer...?

Prefer what? Console or PC? That's a tough one. You can't really decide if you play very specific types of games on each one, can you? I suppose if I had to make a choice, my PC would win, because I can always upgrade my PC.

What are some of your favorite games, past and present?

I am a huge fan of the Final Fantasy series. I'll never forget when Aerith died in FFVII. I think I cried for a week. I even had Great Gospel! Other favorites include the Castlevania series, Conker's Bad Fur Day, Ghosts 'n Goblins...I'm a big NES fan. You can always find some old-school 2D around my place. I'm also a huge MMORPG fan on PC. I play Star Wars Galaxies: An Empire Divided...I can't believe I'm obsessed with that game. Someone should really make me quit.

What's your take on violence and sexuality in video games? Feel like things are nicely balanced or need some tweaking?

I think that there are some games that really go over the top, but were meant to do so, like BMX XXX, the old Leisure Suit Larry series...you get the idea. It's my personal belief (and this applies to all forms of media today) that parents are responsible for what their kids see. They are also responsible for drawing the line between fantasy and reality. I play tons of violent games. I was raised around them, but I don't feel any need to go out and kill people, because my mom always made sure I knew what was right and wrong. I don't know. I think that games will always be progressing and getting more realistic as time goes on, so it becomes more and more important to really educate your kids about this stuff. A parent sees a cartoon squirrel on the box and immediately writes it off as "safe," when it's

Conker's Bad Fur Day...and we all know how awesomely vulgar that game was. [grins]

Who are your favorite male and female vid-game characters?

Favorite male and female video game characters...that is so tough. I am going to completely answer wrong and give you a top 5 for both.

Men: Alucard (Symphony of the Night, PS); Auron (Final Fantasy X, PS2); Sephiroth (Final Fantasy VII, PS); Gregg the Grim Reaper (Conker's Bad Fur Day, N64); and Max Payne (Max Payne, PC).

Women: Samus Aran (the Metroid series); Aya Brea (Parasite Eve, PS); Lulu (Final Fantasy X); Aerith (Final Fantasy VII, PS); and Quistis (Final Fantasy VIII).

Do you have to beat your male counterparts off with a stick? I mean, it's every man's dream to have a wife

who rocks the games.

Oh yeah, with a stick...that's why there's no one lined up at my doorstep. All sarcasm aside, it's really funny you ask me that, because I met my current boyfriend playing Star Wars Galaxies online. I think it's better, because all you can do is relate, it's not about pictures or whatever else. I've met the guy in real life and stuff, but all the initial meetings and conversations we had took place while playing SWG. And when I'm single, it's just something that comes out in conversation.

Guy: "So, what do you do for a living?"

Me: "Well, I'm a student, and I play professional video games."

Guy: "What!? No way, you like games? Unreal! You're like, every guy's fantasy!"

That's usually how it goes. The funny thing to me is that I wonder why no one's asked me to marry them yet...I mean, I can play Splinter Cell all night, I can hang tough

playing Doom 3 against you and your pals, and I make a mean macaroni and cheese. Something just isn't right! [winks]

What are your hobbies/aspirations outside of gaming?

I'm attending school at the University of La Verne in Southern California, and I'm majoring in TV broadcasting. I hope to make the leap to television and either become a sports anchor for ESPN (lifelong goal) or have my own video gaming show. If the whole TV thing doesn't work out though, I'd really love to get in to PR for a video game company, since I love the industry and the people I've met while working in it. It's great to know both sides; you really appreciate the games more when you know what goes into them. Other than going to school, I like sleeping, reading books (yes, I love reading...I'm a loser, what can I say?) and, what else, playing video games!

"I play tons of violent games, I was raised around them, but I don't feel any need to go out and kill people..."



GIRL OF GAMING

WABI-SABI

Rebecca "Wabi-Sabi" Ryiz likes music, science, art, space, philosophizing and kicking the boys' butts at video games. If you're going to get beat by a girl, there are worse ways to go...

play: How'd you get the nickname "Wabi-Sabi"?

Wabi-Sabi: The meaning of "wabi-sabi" is quite different than that of wasabi (the spicy, green stuff served with sushi). "Wabi-sabi" is an ancient Japanese aesthetic, which is difficult to explain precisely, though it refers to the beauty of things imperfect, impermanent and incomplete. I had been re-reading a book on the subject and began using the name "wabi-sabi" as a gaming alias kind of absent-mindedly (the same way I've chosen many gaming aliases). Then, when it seemed to make sense to have just one main name to use for gaming, I opted for sticking with "wabi-sabi." I don't mind if people misconstrue it as wasabi, though, it all makes me smile.

How long have you been seriously into video games?

I began playing video games waaaaay back in the dinosaur ages...when the only real options were those massive

arcade-style machines. I loved those things to death, though, and played pretty much any game that I could find. Of course, then console gaming came along, and with each new and improved console (from my Atari 2600 to my tweaked, green Halo Xbox), plus the more recent addition of online FPS, I've devoured as many games as time (and timing) has allowed...but I've never considered myself to be a "serious" gamer. I play for the sake of playing...because video games are so fun!

Do you play console stuff or stick mainly to online FPS?

I'll play new console stuff, old console stuff, FPS, RPG, strategy, sports, online, offline, Mac, PC, arcade-style, pinball, Game Boy and even those silly games in my cell phone... You name it, I'll play it!!!

So you prefer...?

As far as a preference between online FPS or console gaming, they both have their pros and cons, but I must admit to ultimately preferring the latter of the two...mostly for variety and for the more intimate social factor among the console players I've known and played with. I still consider myself to be fairly new to the world of online FPS games, and although I really enjoy playing them, they hold somewhat of a peculiar value for me. I learn very quickly and I just love getting in there and going nuts, but I'm still trying to find an online FPS that I really, really, truly dig. And, as a Mac user, many online FPS options are limited. Regardless of the fact that online FPS games do offer a huge variety of other players to play against (or with), out of every five or six awesome players, there inevitably will be "that guy" who relies solely on hiding, waiting and sniping everyone over and over again...that is so weak! Talk about fighting like a pansy! Too bad there's no way to mark those guys who play

that way... (Or is there? Please let me know if there is...) Console players seem so much less apt to participate in that behavior...maybe because they'll be forced to do ALL the Taco Bell and beverage runs if they even try to pull any of those moves for long! LOL!

On the positive side, though, I think one of the main reasons I've even stuck to online FPS games for any time at all is because I really love the keyboard/mouse combo for getting things done right. My keyboard and mouse are both from Alienware, and really, there's never been a controller on any console I know of that performs so well! The array of options available at any moment is incomparable to anything else I've tried so far, not to mention incredibly increased dexterity and agility, and all this is yours with no blisters or sore thumb! Yeah! But, unless I find an online FPS that just sweeps me off my feet, I'll still naturally gravitate toward console stuff or old, arcade-style video games. In general, I'm driven more by curiosity than competitiveness, but if it comes down to kickin' some butts, I think it's so much more fun to go head-to-head with a roomful of good friends...blisters, sore thumbs and all... That just rocks!

What are some of your favorite games, past and present?

Some of my favorite video games include mostly those hulking arcade classics: Galaga (of course), Space Harrier, Outrun, Tron, Sinistar ("Beware... I Live!"), Joust, Gauntlet ("Wizard is about to die..." LOL!), Galaxian, Defender, Spy Hunter, Asteroids, Space Invaders, Missile Command (with the ball), Rampage (ridiculous, but fun!), Qix, Zaxxon, Road Blasters, Donkey Kong, Donkey Kong Jr., Pac-Man, Tetris (just because...)...etc., etc., etc. I just love the old stuff!!! (Don't even ask about favorites on my Atari 2600, 5200 or...yikes...ColecoVision! I played every game I could as often as possible!)

Also, for a while, I was really heavy into Street Fighter II on my (long-dead) Nintendo console... that was so great though! Then with PlayStation, I liked a lot of games (Legacy of Kain, Metal Gear Solid, Hydro Thunder, Crash Bandicoot: Warped and especially Tekken!), but I never got as far as I would have liked to on any of them since the unit I had spent more time out getting fixed than at my house. I never did get a PS2... And I even resisted getting an Xbox for a while... (sigh)...but only for a while...now I have two! Presently, I really dig Xbox and have been playing Halo, Madden NFL and Grand Theft Auto. As for online FPS (or just solo time on my Mac), I've been playing Quake, Unreal Tournament, Chess, Return To Castle Wolfenstein, American McGee's Alice or Counter-Strike. I'd like to get a copy of Postal at some point, too, though...that game is so wacky! And I still want my own copy of Carnageddon! And...oh...there are so many more! I don't get out much to arcades these days, but if I do, I'll check out just about anything...especially if it's goofy, gross or gruesome! Ah...so many games, so little time.

What's your take on violence and sexuality in video games? Feel like things are nicely balanced or need some tweaking?

As far as my take on violence and sexuality in video games, well, just like television and movies, I think that some situations are appropriate for or are intended only for certain audiences, and I'm absolutely all for the ratings, rating symbols and content descriptors on games these days.

On my own personal level though, I've always been intrigued by the unconventional and have always had a bit of an unusual, dark sense of humor. So, I do play many games that are dark, wicked, gruesome or destructive. Sometimes the really grisly stuff is a great way for me to blow off steam or a bad attitude or to just alleviate stress

without being a grouch to the people around me.

Who are your favorite male and female vid-game characters?

I don't have a single favorite male or female vid-game character... I don't think I ever did, either. I prefer to check out each character in each game and compare/contrast the strengths/weaknesses of each one. In fact, one thing that really gets me going is to check out the characters that I don't like or understand right away, as I'll end up working harder, learning more and understanding way more angles of a game than I could have otherwise.

Do you have to beat your male counterparts off with a stick? I mean, it's every man's dream to have a wife who rocks the games.

I keep hearing about all these mysterious "guys who dig gals who dig gaming." Who are they and where are they? LOL! If anything, there have been more situations I've come across where guys either won't play us "gals who rock the games" at all, or else they'll work together and gang up against us so that no guy has to bear the shame of getting served by a girl. There are some guys out there

who are really cool about playing with gals, though...

What are your hobbies/aspirations outside of gaming? Outside of gaming, I love music, science, art, space and philosophizing! I am an artist, and eternal student of life, with an absolutely insatiable love of music. I have a small studio (not unlike Dr. Frankenstein's la-bor-a-tory) where I spin my 2000+ records or create my own beats on my Mac. Also, that's where I draw, paint, sculpt, invent, write, do stained glass, wood-burning, photography, make clothing, or whatever other nonsense I happen to have my paws in for the time.

When I want to get out of the house, I love driving all over the place for hours, just listening to music or taking pictures of stuff in my black-on-black '67 Cadillac convertible. In an effort to keep all my wacky art habits funded, I recently started an online t-shirt company called Renegade Clothing. It's small so far, but recently my website got the attention of the WB network and since they featured my stuff nationally on the morning and evening news...things have been rolling along more smoothly... Now I can finally afford the Latin class I've been dying to take at UCLA!!! LOL!!! Geeks rule!

"...out of every five or six players, there inevitably will be 'that guy' who relies solely on hiding, waiting and sniping everyone over and over again... that is so weak!"



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